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## DAS says "Yes, IKON"

Ch. 3 editorial  
praises DAS  
Procurement

By Heather Cavanaugh

Connecticut schools stand to save thousands on technology and supplies because of the state's buying power.

By offering state contracts to school systems across the state, DAS can negotiate discounts for supplies from band uniforms to textbooks.

Most recently at an April 6 press conference, it was announced that IKON copying and services were added to the contract.



Procurement's Jim Passier speaks at an April 6 news conference on a DAS procurement program that will save schools millions of dollars.

"By working with DAS, we've brought the buying power of the State to 169 towns," said Bob Sullivan, marketplace president for IKON.



DAS' Suzanne Liquerman and Kathleen Sullivan meet with Governor John Rowland and the Youth Leadership Forum delegates in the Governor's office.

Please see Story on p. 6

Hartford Public Schools Director of Business Services Bob Ficeto echoed this enthusiasm.

"We've launched an unbelievable effort. Jim [Passier] rolled up his sleeves and said we would do something different to address the needs of schools. And we did," said Ficeto.

Please see Procurement, p.2

# Procurement's wall to wall successes

DAS Procurement's office "wall of fame" continues to grow. In Room G-8 of the State Office Building, DAS Procurement staff post their accomplishments and goals for the 100 Days to CorreCT program.

Along with their achievements are future goals and inspirational sayings to motivate the staff.

"The wall is a constant reminder of what we've done and what we can do to streamline the process and improve turnaround time for customers," said Procurement's Joann McAllister.



## **DAS Times**

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*Contributions are welcome but may be  
edited for space and clarity.*

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[www.das.state.ct.us](http://www.das.state.ct.us)

**Procurement,**  
*cont. from page 1*

Passier saw the importance of this contract coming to fruition.

"This is about people coming together in the right way with the right attitude to focus on the children of Connecticut."

**WFSB ran an editorial  
on April 23, praising  
DAS for creating the  
opportunity for schools  
to save millions of  
dollars and calling the  
plan "so brilliant in its  
simplicity."**

The late nights and long hours invested will now bring a plethora of offerings to students and teachers through this agreement.

Joe Solicito of IKON explained that the contract bundles together four main components: technology services, business services, technology education for students and teachers, and facilities management.

The copying services also allow teachers to make more copies at a cheaper price. Information disseminated can be more timely.

"We're giving the teaching process a shot in the arm," says Department of Education spokesperson Tom Murphy.

"This will bring the process of learning into the 21<sup>st</sup> century," Murphy concluded.

WFSB ran an editorial on April 23, praising DAS for creating the opportunity for schools to save millions of dollars and calling the plan "so brilliant in its simplicity."

*See p.8 for the full text of the editorial.*

Captain Peter F. Warren from the Statewide Narcotics Task Force commended **Nina Ritson's** contribution to their Annual Report FY99/00. "Favorable comments have been received by many readers of this most important document, and we request her to be a major player once again next year."

Chief of Staff Raeanne Curtis of the Department of Consumer Protection commended **Kathy Valone** for the speed with which she addressed their needs with the Fujitsu telephone system project. "Kathy's intelligence, expertise, and outstanding interpersonal skills combine to make her a very valuable employee."

Pamela Anderson thanked **Eva Merriman** for volunteering her time to handle three bids from start to finish. "You have been a great support to me and the team during a crazy busy time."

Peter Kerensky applauded **Janis Nome** and the entire **Diversity Council** for the "global décor, world music, and truly international cuisine transforming DAS into a multi-sensory kaleidoscope of sight, sound, and taste" at the diversity luncheon.

Kudos to the **Financial Services Center** from Maureen Blackburn and Dave Lynn for their "fabulous trade show. The hand-outs were outstanding and so were the smiles. Great giveaway gadgets, too."

Commissioner Barbara Waters praised **Suzanne Liquerman** and **Kathleen Sullivan** for their accomplishments in the Youth Leadership Program. "I cannot

think of a more important effort. You have all of our appreciation and admiration."

State Fire Administrator Jeffrey Morrisette and Peter O'Neil from the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control thanked **Carol Wilson** for her assistance with setting up a three-year food service contract at the Connecticut Fire Academy.

Dick Waterman from the Department of Social Services commended **Mayme Casady** for the "excellent job she did representing DAS at a fair hearing in Norwich. Your explanation to the client and attorney was lucid and firm and you convinced the client to withdraw his objection."

Rick Miarecki praised **Marilyn LaFontaine** and **Shari Grzyb** for their hard work with getting all of the collective bargaining contracts in the HR business rules database.

Commissioner Shirley Ferris of the Department of Agriculture applauded **Jay Tulin** for helping an employee secure a position at another agency. "Because of your diligence and perseverance, she made a smooth transition with no break in service."

Commissioner Barbara Waters thanked **Melissa Colonese** and **Belinda Hall** for generating the Home to Office state vehicle file for appointed officials. "It is going to make our tasks so much easier."

Paige Merrifield Wagner from the Merrifield Paint Company, Inc. praised the "outstanding service" provided by **Paul Greco** and **Tina Costanzo**. "We recently partici-

pated in our first state bid for paint and related products, and both proved to be of immeasurable help to us."

Executive Director Neil E. Reichenberg from the Public Human Resource Certification Council congratulated **Martin Anderson** for fulfilling all of the criteria to receive designation as

## Hats Off

By Cindy Rusczyk

an International Personnel Management Association Certified Professional.

Program Manager David Mintie from the Department of Social Services thanked **Cathy Butterworth** and **Susan Castagna** "for several years of effort on behalf of our recipients, recovering monetary amounts as key members of the Applied Income Disposition Project Team, which resulted in millions of dollars of recoveries."

Special thanks to **Peter Varhol** from Diane Donato for the "outstanding job you did in the arrangement of the dessert room for the diversity luncheon. You were awesome, patient, had great ideas, and provided great laughs."

Carole Johnston praised **Julie Ahlstrin** and **Peter Pappas** for how "professional, kind, patient, and informative" they were in helping her with information regarding a family member's estate.

*Please see Kudos on p.4*

# DAS is out in front. . . again

By Heather Cavanaugh

**I**t takes collective minds to be in the forefront of recovery in the country. DAS is. DAS partners with the Department of Social Services to do

That money goes directly back into the general fund to help the state.

"Between the two agencies, we have every possible venue of recovery nailed," said Estate Administrator for FSC, Abbie Wotkyns.

She explained that DAS collects for programs from Medicare to Welfare.

"There isn't a case we won't look at," she said.

Part of this money is given to the federal government.

Recently, an auditor from the National Office of the Inspector

General checked DAS' policies and procedures and found that we were so far ahead of the curve that they aren't able to figure out the amount owed to the feds.

"We're so far ahead of other states that there is no federal policy for what we do," said Wotkyns.

"Other states do some of this work, but DAS has the agency processing and staffing expertise. Our partnership with DSS has put us on the radar."

Collecting for unreimbursed public assistance produces just under \$25 million a year.

## Victories

estate and lawsuit recovery. DSS will send referrals for services they have rendered. DAS collects money for those services from small estates, accident liens, and lawsuits.

### Kudos, *cont. from p. 3*

Janet DelGreco, Juliet Colebrook, and Vanessa Wimberly thanked **Anne Pomeroy-Dixon** for making their banner for the FSC Trade Show, and for doing such a "super job!"

Roy Dion applauded **Carolyn Koloseus** for the "beautiful job" she did on the new FDP handbook. "Thanks for all of your effort; the final product is well worth it."

Attorney Stephen L. Mangan and Paralegal Anthony Maggiore from the Law Offices of Ericson, Scalise, Mangan, and Zembko, P.C. complimented Reimbursement Analyst **Christopher Fons** "... he was

professional, courteous, and responded promptly to our requests."

David Elwell commended **Anna Tara** for quickly fixing his missing printer connection needed for a specialized form. "Thanks for the great customer service."

Joan Ives-Parisi from the Agricultural Experiment Station praised **Carol Wilson** for the special section on fuel pricing that is now on contracts and said, "What a great reference when we get calls with price discrepancies. Keep up the good work!"

Amy Sehr from New Mexico thanked **Phil Karas** and **Dale Greenwood** for coming to her assistance and for the tremendous effort that they provided with

contacts and career opportunities in Connecticut.

Michael Clark commended the "**DAS committee, DPW security, and everyone** involved in Take Your Kids to Work Day, for planning such an excellent event."

Commissioner Barbara Waters thanked "all of the **DAS employees** who made Take Your Kids to Work Day such a special day for all of us. I can't wait until next year!"

Senator George L. Gunther, on behalf of the Connecticut Air and Space Center, commended **Doug DiPersio** for his help to the organization. "His willingness to go out of his way has measurably increased our ability to achieve an outstanding museum."



# Military intelligence

By John McKay

## Not an oxymoron with Jim Hutt

**Y**ou're in the Army now. After receiving his Bachelor's degree from Central Connecticut State University, Hutt enlisted in the Army.

"It was something I always wanted to do. My father was in the Army and, ironically enough, I was assigned to the same infantry division as my father."

## Up Close

Hutt was stationed at Fort Carson, Colorado for two and a half years where he was introduced to Army life as well as the beginnings of basic management skills both in quality and quantity.

"In the Army, everything has to be by the book, neat, and orderly. Plus, you're dealing with a massive amount of people, supplies, vehicles, etcetera. It gave me a great starting point for learning how to manage people and projects quickly and efficiently. It has come in very handy ever since," he added.

Before leaving the Army, Hutt met with a National Guard recruiter and enlisted in the Connecticut National Guard where he is now a Master Sergeant of the State Area Command (STARC) in Hartford.

"Of course the benefits of being in the Guard are great, but it's the sense of pride and satisfaction I get when putting on the uniform and being a soldier that I enjoy," said Hutt.

By being in the National Guard, Hutt was able to continue his education and received his master's degree in Research, Measurement, and Evaluation from Southern Connecticut State University.

Now, Hutt returns the favor by teaching undergraduate courses in the continuing education program at Teikyo Post University at the West Hartford campus.

"It's very rewarding to see students excel because of what you've taught them," said Hutt.

"A lot of these people I'm teaching haven't been to school in

**"Of course the benefits of being in the Guard are great, but it's the sense of pride and satisfaction I get when putting on the uniform and being a soldier that I enjoy."**

30 years, so I try to alleviate their fears of getting back into school by relaying to them that if you stick with it and are dedicated, you'll get through it," he said.



SLC's Jim Hutt

He's not only a mentor to students, he's a mentor and role model to young soldiers in the National Guard.

"When I see these 18 and 19-year-old kids enlisting in the Guard, I try to see what attracted them to the National Guard and encourage them to pursue that interest," said Hutt.

"The National Guard education, the academic education, and the real life experiences can provide a whole world of opportunities so I talk to them about my experiences and the benefits I took advantage of," he added.

However, right now Hutt is the biggest role model to his three children Maisie, Patrick, and Dennis.

When asked if he would encourage them to join the Army he joked, "Are you kidding? With me as the their dad, they *are* in the Army now."

# Time flies

By John McKay

Then there were 35. With a little more than a month to go, the 100 days to CorreCT project champions gathered to share their accomplishments in streamlining DAS systems and processes.

Presenters Joe Lefkowski, Pam Libby, David Krayeski, Carol Wilson, Shari Gryzb, Cathy Daly, Martin Anderson, and Nick Visone outlined their contributions.

Lefkowski reported three major improvements for HRBC.

"We're pretty impressed with ourselves," he said.

"We've moved from 'The Big Sweep' of eliminating redundancies, to 'The Big Squeeze' and seeing how much more we can improve upon the system."

Lefkowski also explained that there is a new format of online job descriptions including a hot link to salary groups within the spec list, a major reduction in classifications, and simplifying

occupational areas with multiple class levels to five or six levels.

Pam Libby followed up the HR theme with improvements in streamlining statutes that affect HRBC, drafts of rewritten statutes, and plans for an online resume bank with the help of new web-based recruitment programs.

Libby highlighted one of their best ideas: putting directions to testing sites on the website.

"This was really Michelle Burns' idea," said Libby.



"We've gotten hundreds of hits on this one area of the website so we know it was a good idea," Libby said.

A positive side effect of CorreCT is the increasing partnering between business centers.

Procurement's Carol Wilson and HRBC's Joan Donahue teamed up to

revamp the procurement process using temporary employment agencies.

"It was actually pretty easy to cut through the HRBC requirements and simply put the process on CTGovCenter – procurement's online ordering system," said Wilson.

With 65 days down, DAS had made some major CorreCT strides.

*Ed. note: At publication, the May 11 deadline will have already passed, but we thought it was important to include progress reported as of May 7 when this issue went to print.*

## Liquerman, Sullivan tout YLF program

By John McKay

Governor John Rowland is accustomed to meeting delegates at state and national conventions; however the delegates he met in his office in March were some of his favorites.

The Youth Leadership Forum (YLF), a unique training program for high school juniors and seniors who have disabilities, helps develop leadership potential and skills through an intense, four-day curriculum.

DAS' Suzanne Liquerman and Kathleen Sullivan worked with students at this summer's YLF conference at the University of Connecticut.

"I don't even like to use the word disability," said the Governor.

"If you ask me it's the 'ability' we should focus on. The kids from the Youth Leadership Forum have proven that it's their ability to learn, adapt, and move on with their lives, not letting their impairments hold them back from anything," he added.

"To see them today full of confidence tells me that this program is even more successful than anyone had dreamed of."

Participants are chosen based on their contribution to their schools and communities, as well as demonstrated leadership potential. They are representative of Connecticut in terms of geography, gender, ethnicity, and disability type.

Specific objectives of YLF include: setting and prioritizing goals, making effective decisions, increasing self-awareness and self-confidence, understanding the rights of people with disabilities, fostering self-advocacy, team-building, and exploring leadership styles.

By the end of the forum, this year's 28 participants will have developed individual "leadership plans," which will guide them in effecting change in their communities.

One student said, "It was great to get together with other kids who also have disabilities. It lets you know that you're not alone and that there are others going through the same challenges and emotions that you are. The YLF program this summer wasn't easy. There was a lot of work, but when all was said and done, it was an experience I'll never forget."

# Summit addresses nursing shortage By John McKay



**DAS' Dr. Martin Anderson addresses attendees at the Nursing Summit in April.**

**O**n April 5, DAS gathered nursing professionals and state employees in the health care field at the Keeney Memorial Center in Wethersfield to take a close look at the nursing shortage in the state.

SLC's Dr. Martin Anderson hosted the summit.

"The main thing is that there is a severe shortage of both nurses and people going into nursing and this time, it's different from normal employment slumps or cycles," Anderson said.

He said that exacerbating the situation is an aging workforce of nurses who will be retiring in great numbers in the years to come.

"It's not clear where replacements will come from. Potential solutions have run the gamut from getting more young persons interested, to successfully recruiting people to state jobs, to keeping them on the job where they're needed," he added.

A number of problems in the nursing field including pay, safety issues, and recruitment issues were raised, but it was the answers to these problems that the attendees were interested in.

"DAS is, of course, addressing this issue," said Commissioner Barbara Waters.

"We will be focusing our efforts on the recruitment and retention of nurses to state service. DAS hopes to accomplish this by adding a specific section of our website to nurse recruitment, job descriptions, and job availability and really becoming a great resource for nurses and those looking to become nurses."

During the lunch break, attendees broke into discussion groups to address recruitment,

retention, marketing, and possible partnering relationships that could be formed. Together they explored answers to their own nursing shortage questions.

Survey responses came in with high ratings from Departments of Public Health and Mental Retardation, UConn, and other state hospitals.

One respondent wrote, "The topics presented were timely and the variety of presenters was an excellent format."

"It's best to address this issue sooner than later," said Waters.

"By being proactive, DAS will be able to help avoid this impending shortage."

## Divine intervention or just good timing? By John McKay

**L**uck was just a phone call away.

Last month Federal Property Distribution's Doug DiPersio received a call from Paul Iadarola of the Saint Vincent DePaul homeless shelter in Waterbury.

Iadarola wanted to know if DAS' surplus program had any furniture the shelter could purchase at a reasonable cost.

"They were looking for a lot of furniture, and I really didn't think I'd be able to dig up enough for them," said DiPersio.

Nevertheless, DiPersio said he would keep his eyes and ears open.

As if by divine intervention, a week later furniture was being released from the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in New London.

The Waterbury shelter was the fortunate recipient of the beds, desks, and dressers with an acquisition value of \$145,000.

Iadarola couldn't believe his luck; Saint Vincent's never would have been able to afford the furniture if it were purchased new.

Iadarola was effusive in his thanks and praise to DiPersio and DAS' surplus program.



# "Survivor" on the set of DAS

It was a g'day, mate, for an ERP kick-off

They weren't exactly serving up shrimp on the barbie, but the "Survivor" ERP kick-off didn't lack for much!

There were gummy bears, popcorn, and slim jims to munch on – washed down with a refreshing chaser from Dave Elwell's exotic juice bar.

Goody bags aplenty were filled with water bottles and flashlight key chains – for that chance encounter with a wallaby in the parking lot.

The main event was a ring toss run by Deb Hearl and Pam Anderson– lucky winners got a stylish DAS baseball cap.

Lots of skilled tossers won on their first try, but a determined Linda Shackett Blue and Cheryl Catania finally walked away with their caps after numerous times at the plate!

Commissioner "The Ringer" Waters came prepared – with a hula hoop that couldn't miss.

Creatively clad, Patti Kokonowski and Dixie Larned were among a number of DAS

employees who won sweatshirts for their sartorial Outback splendor.

It was a kickoff in classic DAS style – imaginative, energetic, and fun.



By Donna Micklus

Hats off to Cheryl Sawina (in her Survival T-shirt) and the ERP Committee for outshining and outdoing in the Outback.



## WFSB Editorial

The state has come up with a way for Connecticut's public schools to save thousands, maybe millions of dollars just by purchasing items at a discount.

The savings will be made possible by having the schools take advantage of discount and

free services negotiated by the state Department of Administrative Services. It means that schools, regardless of their size, will get all kinds of breaks in buying everything from office supplies to band uniforms.

Private and parochial schools that get no state funding will not be eligible to buy through state contracts but they can negotiate individual money-saving arrangements with the same vendors if they wish.

This idea, so brilliant in its simplicity, will be especially helpful to smaller school districts.

These schools have never been able to save by buying anything in large amounts but now a tiny school system can enjoy the same advantages as a large city system in making purchases.

**A pretty smart move by the Department of Administrative Services.**

I'm Steve Sabato for Channel 3 and we'd like to hear from you.